Manga at a Crossroads:

Classic Manga

Development and Globalization of Manga

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Cover image by Leiji Matsumoto, *Kurea no Mizuumi* (Clara's Lake), 1968
Nakayashi free gift volume, Kodansha

Preface

Manga, Japanese comics, is one of the most well-known forms of Japanese popular culture and has become an important topic of scholarly research in North America. After observing the scale of manga publishing in Japan during 1980s, Professor Maureen Donovan at the Ohio State University Library strategically started collecting manga at OSU. With her leadership over the past 30 years, OSU's manga collection grew to be one of the largest in the US. The collection is particularly strong in historical materials, e.g., pre-war manga, including *Jiji manga, Tōkyō Pakku*, and is often mentioned in manga research, such as Toshinori Egami's *Hondana no Naka no Nippon* (Kasamashoin, 2012). Professor Donovan also assisted many universities (e.g., McGill University) with the establishment of new manga collections as well as organizing academic manga-related events, such as "Happy Birthday Atom! Celebrating Tezuka's Astro Boy: Exhibit and Series of Events on Manga and Robots" (OSU, 2003).

Professor Donovan retired from OSU at the end of 2014-2015. To acknowledge her accomplishments, we organized two manga symposia, titled "Manga at a Crossroads," with the OSU Thompson Library and the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum on March 6 and April 4, 2015. We invited eight prominent manga scholars, and they participated in these symposia.

The goals of these symposia were two-fold. The first goal was to examine the past, present, and future of manga. Since the creation of the first manga magazine, *Eshinbun Nipponchi*, in Japan in 1874, manga evolved and came a long way. For example, although the earlier demographic of manga readers was children largely due to boys' manga (e.g., *Shōnen Sekai* [1895], *Tōkyō Pakku* [1905]) and girls' manga (e.g., *Shōjo Sekai* [1905]), manga quickly became a popular art form read by people of all ages. After manga became a widely-accepted form of popular culture in Japan, it was exported to countries like the US and has become an international phenomenon. In the US, since the introduction of Osamu Tezuka's *Astro Boy* in 1965, manga grew to be a $105 million industry (as of 2012). Many Japanese and international scholars also started writing about manga in English (e.g., Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics* [1993]; Sharon Kinsella's *Adult Manga* [2000]; Natsu Onoda's *God of Comics* [2009]; Jennifer Prough's *Straight from the Heart: Gender, Intimacy, and the Production of Shōjo Manga* [2011]). Manga is no longer a mere source for entertainment for the general public, but is also a serious subject of academic inquiry. However, while manga became mainstream and global, its sales in the US have recently been in decline. Although some publishers attribute the sales drop to the market stabilization and maturation, it is clear that manga is at a crossroads. Thus, through the two manga symposia, we reexamined the origin of manga and future directions of this unique art form that started in Japan. The second goal was to inform the audience of the significance of the manga materials at the OSU libraries, as some materials discussed by the presenters are available at OSU's manga collection.

The two symposia were organized around two themes. The first symposium focused on classical manga. Four speakers, Professors Maureen Donovan (OSU), Thomas LaMarre (McGill University), Gennifer Weisenfeld (Duke University), and Natsu Onoda Power (Georgetown University) looked into classical materials, such as *Jiji Manga* in the 1920s and 1930s and

Yomiuri Sunday Manga in the 1930s. The second symposium was dedicated to development and globalization of manga. The speakers were Professors Masami Toku (California State University, Chico), Jennifer Prough (Varparaiso University), Kerim Yasar (OSU), and Casey Brienza (City University London). The second symposium was held concurrently with the exhibit that Professor Toku brought to OSU in Spring 2015. This volume contains their seven abstracts.

To organize these symposia, many organizations helped us. We would like to thank the following organizations for providing generous support: East Asian Studies Center, Institute for Japanese Studies, The OSU Libraries, Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, Department of History of Art, Department of Arts Administration Education & Policy, Division of Arts and Humanities, Association for Asian Studies, Japan Foundation New York, and US Department of Education (Title VI). Without their support, we would not have been able to organize these symposia.

Etsuyo Yuasa, Namiko Kunimoto, Mineharu Nakayama, and Kerim Yasar
Editors of Manga at a Crossroads

Classic Manga

Comics from the Time of Erotic Grotesque Nonsense:
The Yomiuri Sunday Manga of 1930-1931

Maureen Donovan
The Ohio State University

Against the backdrop of global economic depression, political uncertainty and beginnings of military expansionism, from October 26, 1930 to November 15, 1931 *Yomiuri Newspaper* published a Sunday comics supplement entitled *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*, which was printed in seven colors and featured work by leading Japanese cartoonists. Originally issued weekly, the frequency changed to twice a month from September 1931, for a total of 50 issues before ceasing publication. The Ohio State University Libraries' Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum acquired approximately 80 percent of the issues through purchase in 2014.

Following Miriam Silverberg's scholarship on the complex cultural aesthetics of the 1930s, this paper explores what the Japanese mass media of the time described as an ethos of "erotic grotesque nonsense" (エログロナンセンス), reviewing works by nine cartoonists who published in *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*.[1] Each cartoonist's work can be used to illuminate aspects of what is meant by "erotic grotesque nonsense," the approach taken here to introduce them.

Silverberg emphasizes the centrality of montage for print culture of the time, that is, the juxtaposition of images, ideas, and entities in layouts such as those found on the front pages of many issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*, featuring contributions from several cartoonists in a collaborative composition.[2] She also considers this as part of a "documentary" impulse, producing "new montages to fan and feed the desires of the consuming Japanese subject."[3]

Front pages of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* featured a wide variety of themes including ideas for picnics, fanciful kimono designs, sights and scenes around Tokyo, and even fantasies about harnessing the sun's energies for good use during the hot and humid days of summer. In contrast to a unified presentation, the preference for a montage-type layout reflects the fragmentation of time and space in people's consciousness in the 1930's. Silverberg emphasizes that viewing a montage is an active process in which the viewer creates meaning by navigating between the overall montage and the individual images, which remain distinct.[4] In *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* cartoonists signed their contributions to front page themed montages, so readers could become familiar with each cartoonist's style and unique sense of humor. In addition, the cartoonists also contributed comic strips that filled out the remaining pages of the four-page supplement.

Maekawa Senpan (前川千帆 1888-1960), who became famous as a woodblock print artist, contributed a regular comic strip, "Scatterbrained Mr. Bear" (あわてものの熊さん） to *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* displaying his strong graphic design skills.[5] Experimenting with graphic layout, Maekawa stretches panels over two rows and takes advantage of the full seven-color palette afforded by Yomiuri's outsourced printing of the supplement through an offset process at a specialty printer.

Shishido Sakō's (宍戸左行 1888-1969) influential cartoon strip, Speed Taro (スピード太郎), appeared regularly on the pages of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*, inspiring later mangaka through its exploration of the narrative possibilities of the medium. As a master storyteller, Shishido also contributed other comic strips, including "Her Rebellion" (彼女の反抗), focusing on women's increasing participation in society.[6]

Yanase Masamu's (柳瀬 正夢 1900-1945) comics in *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* reflect his role as an activist cartoonist with a great interest in labor issues. As a painter, Yanase experimented in

the Futurist and Constructivist art movements, but ultimately embraced proletarian art and cartooning. He joined the Communist Party in October 1931, while still working for Yomiuri. His regular cartoon strip in *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*, "Education for the Rich" (金持ち教育), focused on such issues as rising unemployment, labor strikes, and effects of the dramatic deflationary spiral challenging the Japanese economy at that time.[7]

In cartoons published in *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* during autumn 1930 Saeki Yoneko (佐伯米子 1897-1972) imagined the life of a new Japanese woman.[8] Her women are full of "energized, colorful, vitality," which is Miriam Silverberg's definition of "erotic" in the context of the "erotic grotesque nonsense" of the early 1930s.[9] Saeki knew something of such a life, having studied art while living in Paris with her artist-husband, Saeki Yūzō 佐伯祐三, and their daughter. Tragically her husband and daughter both died of tuberculosis in Paris in 1928. Saeki Yoneko went on to a successful career as an artist herself.

Examining cartoons of Shimokawa Hekoten (or Ōten) (下川凹天 1892 – 1973) reveals complexities just below the frothy surface, as people struggled to survive amid the economic deprivation and social displacement of that period. His cartoons provide a window on the "grotesque" of the "erotic-grotesque-nonsense" of the times. As defined by Miriam Silverberg, "grotesquerie is culture resulting from such deprivation as that endured by the homeless and by beggars."[10] In particular, Shimokawa's depiction of the Minseitō and Seiyūkai political parties as locked in endless debates over bonds for unemployment relief while corpses of people who had starved to death fill up the background of the cartoon and his portrait of a waitress nursing her baby in the shadows away from the limelight of the café where she works are two outstanding examples of his use of manga to take a deeper look at political and social issues.[11]

Discussing "nonsense," Miriam Silverberg wrote, "The boisterousness of popular vaudeville can, and in modern Japan did, challenge relationships of domination of one class, culture or one nation-state by another."[12] In the mid-1930s a textbook used in a correspondence course taught by many of the cartoonists of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* was published, including a chapter on how to draw "nonsense manga." In advice about being non-partisan and impartial, the textbook echoes what Silverberg wrote about nonsense as challenging relationships of domination: "Make the capitalist a bee and the laborer a flower, depicting the relationship between them."[13] A small cartoon by Shimokawa Hekoten entitled "Ephemeral Satisfaction" takes aim at new relationships being cultivated at department stores between their employees, who were trained in certain behaviors, and their customers, who quickly adopted corresponding ones. In this case, a female customer has her nose in the sky as a bellhop stares at his shoes.[14]

Contributions from Tōgō Seiji (東郷青児 1897-1978) reveal vitality and sensuality, but also provide a glimpse into darker sides of life in the early 1930s. As a famous modernist artist who pursued a colorful and Bohemian lifestyle, he was the subject of a bestselling 1935 novel by his lover, Uno Chiyo, entitled *Confessions of Love*.[15] Many issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* include one of his portraits of women, some suggesting a kind of "ultra-modern makeup" that signals if a woman is unmarried or if she seeks a rich husband.[16] Others portray women engaged in various activities, such as an elegant skater or a female aviator.[17] However, some of his cartoons dig deeper into the life of the times. In "This is Not 'Girls with Their Father,'" two "modern girls" or "mo-ga" are shown being embraced by an older man in a way that highlights the sexual promiscuity of the "erotic grotesque nonsense" era, but from an ironic and critical perspective.[18] On August 23, 1931, at the depths of the Shōwa Depression, Tōgō Seiji's cartoon entitled "The Death of a Small Bird" presents a pale woman with hollow eyes and a mask-like visage in front

of an empty bird cage.[19] The caption which reads, "Because since yesterday not even a grain of food has been in the cage," makes it clear that this haunting portrait is actually an image of deprivation and starvation. Finally, Tōgō Seiji contributed serialized comic strips on a regular basis to *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*, showing young women engaged in various activities, joining their lovers at the beach, visiting art galleries, or watching baseball games.[20]

Baseball often shows up in the cartoons of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*, relating to the fact that the owner of *Yomiuri Newspaper* since 1924 was none other than Shōriki Matsutarō 正力松太郎, who established the Yomiuri Giants team and became known as the "father of baseball" in Japan. In November 1931 the newspaper sponsored the first tour of American All-Star baseball players to Japan, including Lou Gehrig and Lefty Grove among others, with the front page montage of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* on November 1, 1931 featuring their caricatures. Under Shōriki Matsutarō's ownership, the *Yomiuri Newspaper* expanded its use of cartoons, hired cartoonists, organized them into a department, incorporated cartoons into various sections of the daily paper, and added the colorful Sunday supplement, *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*.[21]

Tanaka Hisara's (田中比左 1890-1974) cartoons focus on "mo-ga," capturing them in swirly lines whether it is a vibrant female skier jumping and flying over the snow, a girl getting her hair dried at a beauty parlor, or a plump woman donning a longer skirt in the fashion of 1931 while smoking a cigarette, fumes swirling around her head.[22] Presenting a vision of continuity in femininity, rather than contrasting old with new, and using his signature wavy, swirly lines, he portrays two women, one in modern dress and the other in traditional, passing each other on the street.[23] Tanaka Hisara's women are best described as "namaiki" or bold, brazen and cheeky, a term Miriam Silverberg identifies in the prewar writings of Sata Ineko as describing the "modern girls" of the time who are aggressive and transgressive, daring to take liberties and crossing boundaries of gender, class, and social mores.[24] Tanaka Hisara depicted these women in his regular comic strip, "Bitter-sweet New Family"(甘辛新家庭), in one episode showing a new bride at lessons to overcome the tendency for legs to go numb when kneeling for a long period, and in another the young couple going out to the theater to see the popular modern Kabuki play, "Hototogisu" ("The Cuckoo") based on Tokutomi Roka's novel.[25]

Asō Yutaka (麻生豊 1898-1961), whose "Easygoing Daddy" (のんきな父さん) cartoon appeared on the pages of the daily *Yomiuri Newspaper* at the time, contributed "The Honorable Baby"(赤ちゃん閣下) strip to *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* along with other cartoons. He was especially interested in how typical middle class families were changing and how the new roles of the salary man and the stay-at-home housewife affected family life.

Ikeda Eiji (池田永治 1889-1950) pursued a documentary impulse to record new technological developments as well as everyday life. Whether it was the competition to achieve nonstop trans-Pacific flight (which two American pilots won in October 1931) or the trendy radio broadcast world, his interests took him toward whatever seemed new and innovative.[26]

With their various approaches, the cartoonists of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* explored the possibilities for cartooning, thereby laying a foundation for the manga of later generations.

NOTES

1. Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).
2. Ibid, 30-31.
3. Ibid, 4.
4. Ibid, 31.

5. My PowerPoint presentation on March 6, 2015 included these cartoons in *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* by Maekawa Senpan: "Guro in the Sky" (May 10, 1931), "More Fan Letters Coming" (May 10, 1931), self-portrait (July 26, 1931), "Scatterbrained Mr. Bear" (August 16, 1931), "Scatterbrained Mr. Bear" (May 3, 1931), and "Miss 1932" (October 18, 1931).
6. My PowerPoint presentation on March 6, 2015 included these cartoons in *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* by Shishido Sakō: "Ero in the Sky" (May 10, 1931), "Her Rebellion" (December 7, 1930), self-portrait (July 26, 1931), and "Speed Taro" (February 1, 1931).
7. My PowerPoint presentation on March 6, 2015 included these cartoons in *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* by Yanase Masamu: "Summer on the Moon" (August 16, 1931), "An Autumn of Red Ink" (November 15, 1931), and "Education for the Rich" (May 3, 1931).
8. My PowerPoint presentation at the symposium on March 6, 2015 included one cartoon, "1940-type female students" by Saeki Yoneko, published in the November 16, 1930 issue of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*.
9. Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense,* xv, 29-30.
10. Ibid.
11. Published in the November 30, 1930 and December 7, 1930 issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* respectively.
12. Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense,* xvi, 30.
13. Nihon Manga Kenkyūkai Kyōikubu, *Mangaka Yōsei Kōgiroku :Zenkan* 漫画家養成講義錄: 全**巻 (**Tōkyō : Nihon Manga Kenkyūkai, [1936?]), 6: 36.
14. Published in the November 23, 1930 issue of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*.
15. Uno Chiyo, *Confessions of Love*, translated by Phyllis Birnbaum (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).
16. Published in the November 30, 1930 and December 7, 1930 issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* respectively.
17. Published in the February 1, 1931 and May 10, 1931 issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* respectively.
18. Published in the February 8, 1931 issue of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*.
19. Published in the August 23, 1931 issue of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*.
20. In addition to those cited above, my PowerPoint presentation on March 6, 2015 included comic strips by Tōgō Seiji from the November 16, 1930 and November 15, 1931 issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga.*
21. *Yomiuri Shinbun Hyakunenshi* (Tōkyō: Yomiuri Shinbunsha, Shōwa 51 [1976]), 327-328. *Yomiuri Shinbun Hyaku-nijūnenshi* (Tōkyō : Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1994), 120-122.
22. Published in the November 30, 1930, April 19, 1931 and February 1, 1931 issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* respectively.
23. Published in the March 22, 1931 issue of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga*.
24. Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense,* 69-70.
25. Published in the November 9, 1930 and October 4, 1931 issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* respectively.
26. Published in the August 23, 1931 and April 19, 1931 issues of *Yomiuri Sunday Manga* respectively.

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Yomiuri Shinbun Hyaku-nijūnenshi 読売新聞百二十年史. (Tōkyō: Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1994.

Laughing in the Face of Calamity: Visual Satire after the Great Kantō Earthquake

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When a massive earthquake on the order of 7.9 magnitude hit the Kantō region around the Japanese capital Tokyo on 1 September 1923, it caused over 100,000 people to be crushed or incinerated. It was one of the largest natural disasters of the early twentieth century. Soon dubbed the "Great Kantō Earthquake" (*Kantō Daishinsai*), it wreaked unprecedented damage and razed nearly forty-four percent of the Tokyo metropolitan land area, the capital of the Japanese empire. The quake similarly decimated the major commercial port city of Yokohama in nearby Kanagawa prefecture and large portions of five other surrounding prefectures.

While this was Japan's worst national disaster and a tragedy of unprecedented proportions, not all responses to it were melancholic. Visual satire and humor have long been an important element in responses to catastrophe in Japan. Laughing in the face of calamity was not only a means of reclaiming normalcy through stress relief and psychological catharsis; it was also a method of conveying powerful social and moral criticism. The immediate post-quake moment echoed with the popular phrase, "under these circumstances!" (*kono sai [da kara]*!) and opened the door for a wide array of reform proposals.

This paper explores the visual satire of pioneering Japanese cartoonist and political critic Kitazawa Rakuten (1876-1955), considered the father of modern *manga*, and the stable of skilled, popular cartoonists working for the weekly publication *Jiji Manga* (Cartoons of Current Affairs), a supplement to the Tokyo daily newspaper *Jiji Shinpō*. Taking on the many ironies of the postquake moment and the slippery politics of reconstruction—specifically the conflicted perceptions of its main architect, Home Minister Gotō Shinpei (1857-1929)—these visual artists mediated the perception of the disaster experience. They made a major contribution to the dynamic postquake visual sphere, demonstrating the critical importance of visuality in shaping popular perceptions of disaster.[1]

As humor scholar Marguerite Wells has noted, satire (fūshi) is humor "directed at the faults, vices, or follies of individuals or institutions, always with the intention of exposing and correcting them."[2] With its strong moralistic imperative, satire often displays an uncomfortably aggressive style that grows out of the producer's sense of his or her role as a guardian of ideals or an upholder of the social good. Satire can also display a kind of moral absolutism in which the satirist sets forth standards against which to measure society and finds it wanting. Thus, visual satire aims to challenge social norms and often critiques the perceived baser qualities of human nature.[3] Disasters provided ideal opportunities to articulate these social criticisms in the interest of facilitating change.

Therefore, despite powerful official postquake discourses of national resilience and solidarity, all voices were not cohesive or positive. Several scholars have written compellingly on the range of moralizing campaigns after the quake, often rhetorically framed within the discourse of "divine punishment" (*tenken* or *tenbatsu*), which focused on criticizing modern Japanese society and the government. And they have illuminated the highly contested ground of the postquake political world as various parties sought advantage during this moment of so-called "golden opportunity."[4] Thus it is not surprising (although perhaps still shocking) to hear the governor of Tokyo, Ishihara Shintarō, invoke this familiar rhetoric of divine punishment in 2011 related to the Great Tōhoku quake that recently devastated northeastern Japan, as a

criticism of the "egoism" of contemporary Japanese society, a tactic that clearly has nothing to do with the divine.[5]

In 1923, the Taishō period, a moment when the Japanese modern was in full swing, such criticisms were resurrected together with the familiar allegorical symbol of the catfish (*namazu*), frequently invoked after the great Ansei Earthquake of 1855 as a harbinger of divine discontent and punishment. It was commonly believed that a subterranean cosmic fish lived under the islands of Japan (later specifically identified as a catfish, which many people noticed often act strangely before earthquakes, perhaps because they swim in the mud close to the ground and sense small tremors early on). This catfish would periodically get loose, causing earthquake tremors by shaking the country on its back at moments of moral or social crisis, particularly when there was a perceived need for "spiritual reconstruction" (*seishin fukkō*).[6] Allegorical catfish imagery was revived after the Great Kantō earthquake again to personify the social perception of a natural or divine discontent with society and the need for "world rectification" (*yonaoshi*). Humor was a powerful yet entertaining medium for leveling what could be extremely harsh social criticism.

While studies are beginning to emerge that illuminate the multiperspectival view of Japan's disasters from different class positions or from the viewpoint of the differing interests within communities of disaster, there is still a tendency to focus on the political sphere and the official views of statesmen, bureaucrats, and technocratic urban planners; or, alternatively, to concentrate on the individual responses of the literary and artistic communities in terms of their subjective expression and personal pathos. All of these approaches are extremely valuable and illuminating for understanding the diverse, and often contending, claims for imputing meaning to major catastrophic events. It is clear that disasters do not have a singular meaning. They mean different things to different people. But the question still remains, how do diverse media, and visual culture more generally, mediate the communication and understanding of such historical events. A focus on the public sphere of visual satire offers a melding of the artistic and the political—the private and the public. Visual satire crystallized acute social issues through allegory, metaphor, and the play between text and image. As a subset of editorial journalists, satirists certainly held a privileged social position, but they also saw themselves as representatives of the people and champions of public interest. Their social role as voices of popular discontent and public unease in relation to the higher echelons of power and the radical transformations of modernity in general provides another important part of the unfolding dialogue on disaster and its aftermath.

Three basic themes emerged after the 1923 quake as targets of biting critique: disaster opportunism (whether it be political leverage or commercial profiteering), the basic vices of human nature exacerbated by modernity (greed, self-interest, materialism), and the unilateral and grandiose plans of reconstruction that took a national macro view of the capital without concern for the suffering or displacement of the people.

NOTES

1. This paper is a selected excerpt from a book-length study on the visual culture produced in response to the Great Kantō Earthquake. See Gennifer Weisenfeld, *Imaging Disaster: Tokyo and the Visual Culture of Japan's Great Earthquake of 1923* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012). The complete essay has also been published as Gennifer Weisenfeld, "Laughing in the Face of Calamity: Visual Satire after the Great Kantō Earthquake," in *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia*, ed. Monica Juneja and Gerrit Jasper Schenk (Regensburg, Germany: Schnell und Steiner, 2014), 125-134. Research on *Jiji Manga* was conducted in the collection of The Ohio State University Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum.

2. Marguerite Wells, "Satire and Constraint in Japanese Culture," in *Understanding Humor in Japan*, ed. Jessica Milner Davis, Humor in Life and Letter Series (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006), 194.
3. Ibid., 210-11.
4. Janet Borland, "Capitalising on Catastrophe: Reinvigorating the Japanese State with Moral Values through Education following the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake," *Modern Asian Studies* 40, no. 4 (2006): 887; Haruno Ogasawara, "Living with Natural Disasters: Narratives of the Great Kantō and the Great Hanshin Earthquakes (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1999), 88-99.
5. "Tokyo Governor Apologises for calling tsunami 'divine punishment'," guardian.co.uk, Tuesday 15 March 2011, accessed 23 March 2011.
6. For selected discussions of catfish imagery, see, Andrew Markus, "*Gesaku* Authors and the Ansei Earthquake of 1855," in *Studies in Modern Japanese Literature: Essays and Translations in Honor of Edwin McClellan,* ed. Edwin McClellan, Dennis C. Washburn, and Alan Tansman (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1997); and Gregory Smits, "Shaking Up Japan: Edo Society and the 1855 Catfish Picture Prints," *Journal of Social History* 39, no. 4 (Summer 2006).

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Questioning the Racial Question: Representations of Human Faces in Classic Manga

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"Why do characters in manga look more Caucasian than Japanese?" is a question that continues to be asked, at least in the United States.[1] This summary revisits the question, investigating it as its *subject* rather than its *question*. Why does this question still elicit such active discussions? What does the question reveal about the cultural biases of the questioner?[2] What does the discord between the Japanese and US-reactions to the question teach us about how race is constructed, signified, and interpreted in the two contexts? In the first part of this summary, I propose a series of "revisions" to the question for a more dialogic, culturally-conscious, and medium-specific discourse. The second part focuses on what the question "does" as opposed to what it "asks," analyzing it as a *performative utterance* (Austin 1962) that makes certain realities come into existence. This investigation reveals not so much about manga itself but about the ways in which "Asian/ Japanese face" has been constructed in the US, and how manga activates American anxiety surrounding race by introducing a completely unfamiliar rules of signification.

The most obvious, and most frequently contested assumption in the question is: *the large-eyed, varied-hair-colored look in manga indeed signifies race* (Levi 1996; McCloud 1996; Thorn n.d.). Antonia Levi addressed it as early as 1996: "Asking Japanese friends to explain doesn't help. They are baffled by the question." She explains that the "large-eyed, varied-hair-color look […] began as a portrayal of Westerners" in *Berusaiyu no bara (The Rose of Versailles)* by Ikeda Riyoko, 1972-73. The style became so popular that "[to] contemporary Japanese, [the look] no longer indicate[s] race" (Levi 1996, 11). While Levi's historical explanation is inaccurate (large-eyed characters in shōjo manga appeared at least a decade earlier than *Berusaiyu no Bara*), her claim is important on two accounts: 1) the Japanese readers do not interpret the drawn features as markers of the Caucasian race; and more implicitly 2) manga is produced by artists who make unique, aesthetically-driven choices (i.e. manga does not simply "reflect" the cultural consciousness of the masses). With these two points in mind, we might rewrite the question as follows: "Why do Japanese manga artists draw characters with such large eyes, and varied (light) hair colors?"

There are technical explanations for the large-eyed, light-haired look. Artists use elaborate details inside the characters' pupils to communicate the characters' emotions. The larger the eyes, the more expressive the character, and the greater the readers' empathy with the character; protagonists usually have larger eyes than the antagonist. The technique of depicting characters with light hair is called *shironuki* (literally "blanking out") and it is used to distinguish the characters. Light hair color does not automatically indicate that the character is blond; rather, it symbolically represents black hair without depicting it. Varying hair colors to distinguish between characters is not unique to manga; it would be difficult to tell the characters apart in *Peanuts* cartoons, for example, if they all had the same hair.

Another powerful assumption is that *there are ways in which "Asian" or "Japanese" faces should appear*. This notion is so pervasive that it *creates* a kind of reality. Regardless of what the *actual faces* look like on the streets of Tokyo, there will always be an *idea* of what Japanese faces should look like. Both the actual faces and the idea will change over time; but the two will never quite exactly match up.[3] This topic was frequently explored in scholarly and creative texts in other disciplines; Playwright David Henry Hwang addresed it in *Yellow Face,* a semi-

autobiographical play that revolves around a casting controversy for an "Asian leading man." One of the most comical scenes in the play takes place immediately after an audition. The producer does not want to cast a certain actor because he "does not look Asian." DHH, the playwright-character based on Hwang himself, replies: "And what exactly are Asian features? […] Short, high cheekbones, slanty eyes? […] I gotta say, I find your question sort of offensive. Asian faces come in a variety of shapes and sizes – […] just like any other human beings. Which we are, you know" (Hwang 2006, 22). DHH ends the scene by claiming "I can see an Asian when I see one." The actor in question, later in the play, turns out to be 100% white.

There is, however, an important distinction: while Hwang's play deals with the casting of a human actor, the question deals with pictorial representations. The assumption, more specifically, is: "There is a way in which "Japanese/Asian" faces should be represented *in a drawing*." How did this assumption come into existence? How do we construct rules about how race is represented in *pictures*? The answer is simple: through *other pictures*. One way to revise the question, then, is to limit the scope of the question to *other drawings*: "Why do characters in manga look different from other pictoral representations of Japanese faces that I have seen?"

One of the most pervasive images of "Japanese face" in the west may be Edo period portrait prints (ukiyo-e), which depict faces with elongated faces, extremely narrow eyes, and small mouths. Manga faces, clearly, is a radical departure from this tradition. The prints, however, do not seek to photographically reproduce reality, but to achieve beauty according to the standards of a certain "style"; print artists also depicted faces of westerners in a similar manner during the same period. Comparing the prints to modern manga is equivalent of comparing a 19th century oil portraiture to a Disney princess: it neglects the variations, innovations, and changes that have taken place in between, not to mention the conditions of production, socioeconomic background, intended audience, and myriad other factors that influence a work of art. Another example that powerfully constructed the image of the Japanese face in more recent history is American war propaganda cartoons. During World War II, newspaper cartoonists depicted the Japanese as rats, lice, and, most commonly, as apes or monkeys. It would be grossly inaccurate, however, to say that the American public *perceived* the Japanese as apes or monkeys; these images do not *reflect* stereotypes, they *create* them. By the very definition of propaganda, they have no pretense of neutrality. Our ideas of what we think Japanese faces should look like *in a drawing* have been built upon *someone else's intention*.

So far I have approached the question as a true question, focusing on what it is *asking*; here I will shift to investigating it as a *performative utterance*, focusing on what it is *doing*. J.L. Austin (1962) defines performantive utterances as speeches that do not merely describe an action, but *is* an action in itself. For example, by saying that "I bet you five dollars that it will rain tomorrow," I have not described the rain, or the action of betting; I have actually placed a bet. Uttering the sentence has made the action of the bet come into existence, and named the *possibility* of rain. Similarly, by asking "Why do manga characters look Caucasian?" the question *names*, not *describes*, the similarity between manga characters and Caucasian facial features, calling it into existence: "Japanese people depict themselves as Caucasian. Why?"; "Japanese people seem to want to look more Caucasian. Why?"

There is no denying that there is a strong fascination with, and idealization of, the West in Japanese popular and consumer culture. From fashion magazines to TV ads, Japanese contemporary culture is saturated with images of Caucasian models and film stars. What may simply appear to be "idealization of Caucasian features," however, have longer, more complex history. For instance, take the Japanese fascination with fair skin. Japanese beauty industry

makes astronomical profit in skin-whitening products each year. It is dangerous to casually equate "fair skin" with "likeness to Caucasians"; fair skin as the standard of beauty existed long before Japan's encounter with the Westerners. But then again, it is equally dangerous to say that the Japanese desire for fair skin has remained unchanged since the ancient times. We need a more nuanced understanding.

Cultural colonization aside, a casual American reader who asks "Why do characters in manga look more Caucasian?" is not, most likely, addressing the deep ideological or historical questions about Japan's relationship with the West. Rather, the questioner may be voicing his or her own racial anxiety prompted by the image. The question performatively reduces the image and its myriad histories and influences to the question solely of race. There is an episode of *The Tyra Banks Show*, a talk show hosted by model Tyra Banks, that has elicited heated discussions on Asian American online forums and on YouTube.[4] The guest of this particular show was a young Korean American woman named Liz, who recently had a plastic surgery to increase the size of the fold on her upper eyelids, a common procedure in East Asia. When asked to explain why she chose to go under the knife, Liz starts to say that her eyelids were starting to sag, and that she wanted more youthful, more open eyes. Banks, interrupting her, changes the subject to Liz' upbringing and childhood—being (racially) teased for the shape of her eyes as a child. Banks then goes on to accuse Liz for subscribing to the Eurocentric standards of beauty, and not admitting it. The responses in YouTube comments and discussion forums have ranged from calling Banks "racist" to calling Liz "in denial." It is impossible to accurately guess the true intention of Liz' surgery, but it is clear that the idea of a racial minority "making his or her face look more Caucasian" invites fiercely uncomfortable reactions in the US.[5] Robert Stam and Ella Shotat call it "the double binds and Catch-22s of racism: 'if you are too unlike us, you are inferior; if you are too like us, you are no longer a 'real' Black or Indian or Asian'" (2014, 24). As a child, Liz was bullied for the shapes of her eyes; as an adult, she was bullied even more, on public television, for changing them.

It is not surprising, then, that the manga faces (devoid of any markers of "Asian-ness" previously seen in drawings) confuses US readers. "Why do Japanese people depict themselves as *racially neutral*, though this is usually a privilege granted only to white people?" Though we have a (half) black president, whiteness is still powerfully equated not only with privilege but more importantly with the "norm." No one described George W. Bush as a "white" president; nor do we refer to Obama as "half white" president. "There is no more powerful position than that of being "just" human," Richard Dyer writes. "The claim to power is the claim to speak for the commonality of humanity. Raced people can't do that—they can only speak for their race […]" (1997, 2). Manga presents an alternate reality in which "whiteness" is *not* the absence of race: A Japanese person living in Japan *is* racially neutral to other Japanese people living in Japan. A Japanese child growing up in Japan is never teased for the shape of his or her eyes in grade school (at least racially). Only through the gaze of a "white person" (or others who appropriate this gaze), a Japanese subject becomes the "other." Manga was not produced with this gaze in mind, at least in the twentieth century.

While the question "why do characters in manga look Caucasian?" is still pervasive, the ways in which manga characters are "read" in the US is rapidly changing. In summer 2014, L'Oreal produced a new mascara named *Miss Manga.* It promises to deliver extremely long, heavy lashes. The ad for the product shows a blue-eyed, (presumably) Caucasian model sporting the "manga look." The ad seems to be proclaiming a major change in the discourse: manga faces no longer "imitate" Caucasian faces; Caucasian faces now imitate manga faces. Perhaps, manga

readers in the US are at the forefront of the racial discourse. They are questioning, subverting, and parodying the concept of race even without knowing. They may be changing the world, one eyelash at a time.

NOTES

1. I use the term "biases" here not pejoratively as "prejudices" but simply as "conditions of interpretation."
2. While I have heard the question from people from other countries and backgrounds, my experiences are primarily limited to the United States where I currently live.
3. The idea that Japan is a homogenous country has been contested, given the presence of ethnic minorities and Asian immigrants; the population is becoming even more diverse in recent years through immigration and mixed marriages as well. The public idea of a "Japanese face," however, exists apart from this reality.
4. "Tyra Banks-Asian Eyelid Surgery," YouTube video, 8:27, posted on January 9, 2008, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOcSJSJWD60.
5. Double-eyelid surgery, similar to Liz', is popular in Japan. Scholars have explored the complex discourses surrounding the practice, intertwined and correlated with, but not solely caused by, the embodiment of Euroamerican standards of beauty (Kawashima 2002; Miller 2006).

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Development and Globalization of Manga

Power of Shōjo Manga: Influences in Children's Artistic and Aesthetic Development

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Children tend to draw what they know rather than what they see (Goodnow 1977)

In this paper, I'd like to discuss three topics: (1) the characteristics of manga including gender differences; (2) a case study: the influences of manga on children's aesthetics in their pictorial world; and (3) Beyond Manga.

Boys' versus Girls' Manga: Influences on Children's Pictorial World

Manga developed uniquely in Japan after World War II as entertainment for children. It eventually diversified to please various audiences of different ages, genders, and favorite themes. One of the major characteristics of manga is its split into boys' (shōnen) and girls' (shōjo) manga. Each has developed in its own way in response to readers' expectations, and each has its own themes. Generally speaking, regardless of the subject, the main themes in shōnen manga are competitive fighting and how the heroes become men by protecting women, family, country, or the earth from enemies.

Shōjo manga, on the other hand, was highly influenced by *shōjo zasshi*'s (girls' magazines') visual images of beautiful girls with big eyes and slender bodies with narrow arms and legs (Masuda 2008). As a result, the semiotic signs of beauty in shōjo manga developed uniquely, including just a dot for a nose, a tiny mouth, and big eyes with stars in them. These characteristics appear strongly in almost all Japanese girls' drawings as their favorite drawing styles, and it was very recognizable in the Japanese girls' drawings in my study. Unlike boys' manga, the theme of girls' manga is simply love, but "Love" in all its complexity.

Manga Literacy: Semiotic and Semantic Signs in Shōjo and Shōnen Manga

Regarding the visual images, the visual grammar of Japanese manga is highly developed, with semiotic signs and semantic usages of composition diverging after the 1960s into boys and girls manga. The influence of American comics (especially Disney) on Japanese manga dates back to the end of World War II. Ironically, the advanced visual grammar seen in Japanese comics seldom appears in American comics nowadays and has seldom developed in any other comics around the world. What are the semiotic signs and semantic usages of composition in manga? Why and how did they develop differently from that of any other comic style?

According to Natsume (1997, 1999), comics are composed of three elements: pictures, words (with or without bubbles), and frames (panels). Pictures are the images of figures and the backgrounds. Words appear in the picture and independently outside of the frame with or without balloons, representing internal thoughts or external speech. Frame is simply a container that includes the picture and the words, but often integrates time and space as a kind of metacognition in manga.

The limitation of manga's medium encouraged the artists to devise new methods in their creations. Manga is a very cheap format, originally targeting children who do not have much money to spend to purchase the manga (e.g., a monthly magazine including 15 to 20 stories with 500 pages was around $5 in 2013 [*Manga Zasshi*, http://www.zasshi-data.com]). Manga had to

be created in a cheap format in black and white except for cover pages in full color. Unlike the full-color American comics that can represent visual characteristics with colors, Japanese manga had to make do with black and white. The limitation on the usage of color forced the artists to invent a new manga literacy to represent visual images, depending on the situation (Yomota 1994).

The shapes of word bubbles, such as square, round, and spiky, can also represent the speakers' emotions as external voices or internal thoughts surface (Otsuka 1995). The usage of frames (panels) is especially developed in shōjo manga. To describe the psychological complexity in diverse stories, the angle, size, and shapes of frames are displayed effectively on the two-dimension flat surface. The ways diverse frames are used often effectively represent past, present, and future (Ito 2005; Masuda 2002; Natsume 1997). This usage of multi-perspective views, the photographic view, and the exaggerated view were also seen in the Japanese children's drawings of the study (Toku 1998, 2001a, 2001b).

Thus manga, especially shōjo manga, is full of semiotic and semantic signs (Iwashita 2013). The mangaka (comic artists) and readers share the visual signs to understand the story within the limited manga environment without any colors. Natsume mentions that Japanese manga artists and readers have a highly developed manga literacy owing to the limitations of the medium. As a result, Japanese children can read manga quickly and understand the content of manga clearly and easily. Furthermore, Japanese children, regardless of gender, showed the semiotic signs of shōjo manga in my 1998 study (Toku 2015).

A Case Study of Children's Artistic and Aesthetic Development

Many researchers, including myself, have recognized the cultural and social influences in children's pictorial worlds. As the result of cross-cultural research in 1998, I concluded that one significant cultural phenomenon in Japanese children's artistic and aesthetic development was visual-pop culture, especially manga in Japan (Toku 2015).

To take a closer look at children's artistic and aesthetic development after the quantitative research on children's drawings in 1998, I decided to do a follow-up case study by observing one child's development starting in 2000. The goal of this case study was to see if he also followed the universal tendency regardless of his two different cultural backgrounds—Western and non-Western culture. The thing that I was most curious about was if and when the visual pop-cultural influences would appear in his drawings.

Universal Tendency in the Pictorial World

The subject of my case study, Theo, was born in January 1998 in the US in the college town of Champaign, Illinois, the son of an American father (Caucasian) and a Japanese mother (Asian). Theo started to draw at the age of one, and until he was three, he followed the universal tendency of artistic development. Toward the end of his second year, Theo started to draw figurative images, what Lowenfeld calls "tadpole men (1970)."

However, Theo showed unique characteristics in drawing the face of the tadpole man. There are five small circles on the face from top to bottom—two dots, two small holes, and one wider oval shape—depicted on the face. We might assume that the top two dots were the eyebrows, the two small holes were the eyes, and the oval shape was the mouth. Theo asked me one day to show him how to draw a nose because it was very difficult for him. I told him to touch his nose.

He said he felt “two holes.” I said, “Yes they are important holes for breathing.” From that point, he started drawing two holes to represent a nose. His lines were clear, strong, and confident, and the nose circles were beautifully drawn in the center of the face.

At the age of three and a half years, Theo suddenly stopped drawing noses on faces although he had previously drawn two holes to represent the nose. According to Lowenfeld’s theory (1970), it was a sign that he had regressed to the previous stage, since he did not draw the nose that would exist on a realistic drawing of a face. Did he really regress? No, Theo purposely omitted the nose circles because he thought it was neither beautiful nor correct. It was against his aesthetic. I call his decision an “aesthetic omission.” Interestingly, the same characteristics appear in the images of girls in Japanese shōjo manga (girls’ comics). In most cases, the noses on girls’ faces tend to be drawn as tiny, or they are completely omitted. The reason for this is the same as Theo’s. It is not easy to draw a beautiful nose. Until he found a solution in drawing a mirror image J (“し”) that he saw in his friend’s drawing at the age of four, he omitted the nose.

Appearance of Influences of Visual-Pop Culture in the Pictorial World

What is the big difference between the era of Lowenfeld’s universality theorists of the1950s and the beginning of the 21st century? We are surrounded with a flood of visual images everywhere. Children are exposed to television, the Internet, and video games, and they are easily influenced by those media. Theo was no exception. He was first influenced by Japanese pop culture (J pop) icons such as Pikachu at the age of about four. It was a time when there was a lot of Japanese animation (or anime) on Saturday morning television. As did many children, Theo became obsessed with the images of pokemon (pocket monsters) and drew them over and over. He eventually started to create his own scenes. The cute pokemon appeared in a lot of fight scenes, a typical characteristic of boys’ drawing and shōnen manga/anime.

When Theo turned seven (entering first grade), he started to create his own characters rather than mimicking his favorite characters from TV, comics, or toys. Worm World is one example of a theme that he explored for at least two years (from seven to nine years of age), and it greatly influenced other children in his class. Tiny worms became strong soldiers with weapons and robot vehicles (like “Gundam” or “Transformers”). Of course, they were fighting for someone (maybe family and friends) or something (to rescue the earth from enemies).

After his worm world phase, Theo became captivated by penguins. From the time he purchased a stuffed penguin at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, the penguin became more than just an animal to him, but more like a brother, since he was an only child. Each time he went somewhere, he collected stuffed penguins and even brought them with him on trips to Japan. At the same time, he started to draw a series of penguins in different situations and costumes that represented their roles and personalities. In the penguin’s face, he represented the difference between cute and realistic by emphasizing the size of the body and eyes (big eyes were cute and small eyes were realistic). He knew how to represent cuteness and coolness and even serious penguins in diverse styles. Where did he get the idea? This may be an example where the influence of shōjo manga has spilled over into boys’ manga.

At the end of his elementary school life (when he was eleven and a half years of age), Theo became interested in the details of mechanical objects as well as cute penguin styles. At that time, he built complicated models of transforming robots in Japan during his summer visit, and he was obsessed with drawing mechanical details and geometric lines with Sharpies. He still used only black pencils or black Sharpies. At this time (up to 12 years of age), he drew two

different styles: cute comics figures and mechanical objects in detail. Seemingly, he was interested in realistic machinery but not realistic figures. Rather, he was creating comics objects. Up to age 12, he was a typical boy, and there are clearly manga (more than anime) influences in his drawings. At around ages 13 to 14, Theo stopped drawing because of internal and external conflicts (Toku 2011, 2014, 2015). As Read (1974) pointed out, children tend to stop creating art around this age. With so many external attractions and interests as well as his internal value changes, Theo suddenly lost his motivation to draw, but fortunately his interest returned at 14 years of age when he enrolled in an art class and his teacher again encouraged him to create art. He is now 17 years old, and there is no way to predict how he will develop artistically. One can surely imagine, however, that his creativity will be consistently influenced by the media and visual images that surround him

Conclusion: Beyond Manga

Michael Bitz, founder of the Comic Book Project (2005), mentioned in his book, *Manga High,* that US high school students clearly stated their liking for manga, but not for American comics. In this afterschool program organized by Bitz in 1998 in New York, at-risk students were encouraged to create their own graphic novels to represent their own stories. For that project, most students mimicked manga styles. One reason was that they could not relate to American comic heroes, but manga's characters shared their problems. Japanese manga have more suitable visual images and more personal stories that children and youths can identify with, as opposed to American comics with their stereotypical images of heroes and heroines (Bitz 2009).

The influences of shōjo manga are apparent in the art of many children, from the Japanese schoolchildren of my 1998 study to Theo's childhood drawings to the drawings of the New York City high school students of the Comic Book Project. Wilson (2003) pointed out that Japanese manga are "rhizomes"—lateral shoots that extend from multiple sources and sprout spontaneously to create different forms. If so, manga will continue to influence children's minds in new ways and as a result will continue to appear in their pictorial worlds. In this way, pop culture influences are constantly reaching out in different directions, making connections, and sprouting in different ways in the manga of each culture and country.

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Local Texts, Global Audiences: a view from within the *shōjo* manga industry

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As these two workshops at OSU attest, manga has become an international or transnational phenomenon. Fueled by wider trends in the spread of Japanese popular culture over the past three decades audiences across the globe have clamored for more manga in translation, whether official or not. Based on my research on the mainstream *shōjo* manga publishing industry in Japan, in this talk I will discuss the process of internationalizing manga from the perspective of the Japanese manga industry. During the core of my research in 2000-2002, the Japanese publishing houses were just starting to really take note of international interest in manga. Focusing on that early moment, I will talk about the ways that the manga industry has chosen to engage, and not to engage, with the international spread of manga over the past decade and a half.[1]

When I started my doctoral degree in the mid-nineties anime clubs were proliferating across campuses in the US; anime had become a primary feature during all the major cartoon TV slots and Cartoon Network was experimenting with titles not just for kids. Japanese popular culture from Tamagotchi, to Sailor Moon, to Pokémon was visible everywhere. Translated manga were starting to appear on the shelves of major book stores, Barnes and Noble and Borders in particular. Jumping ahead a decade, by 2007 manga books all but took over the graphic novel section of major book stores and libraries; between 2002 and 2007 manga sales in the US more than tripled from $60 million to $200 million.[2] Since then, we have witnessed a decline in the prevalence of manga in the US. Already by 2008, and for the past five years or so there have been consistent decreases in the number of published translated manga for sale in the US. According to the pop culture research blog ICV2, the decline in manga sales was fueled by the onset of the recession in 2008 as well as the availability of manga more immediately translated online and frequently for free.

Throughout this same time period, in Japan, the press, scholars, and even government officials began labeling Japanese popular culture "Japan's new ambassador." Already in 2000, perusing the manga studies section of any major Japanese bookstore you could find numerous books describing or explaining the appeal manga and anime have for international audiences. Former Prime Minister Tarō Asō, famously a fan of manga and anime himself, identified Japanese tourism and culture as one of three high growth areas that would help revitalize the economy by the year 2020. Accordingly, in 2008 Doraemon was named Japan's "anime ambassador" in an attempt to capitalize on the marketing of Japanese cultural products AND to market Japan through its cultural products.[3] Through international exchange projects related to traditional culture and art as well as pop culture, government officials hoped to make use of Japan's soft power to further develop overseas markets for national products. All reports indicate that these kinds of promotions are set to ramp up in the next few years as Japan prepares for a global audience for the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. We are all but guaranteed a cute mascot!

With this context of Japan and the West thinking about Japanese popular culture at the turn of the century in mind, I want to turn now to think about the production of manga in Japan. My research was on the production of *shōjo* manga; when I arrived in Japan in 2000 I wanted to understand how this rich and complex genre of comics for girls emerged, in the other countries that have varied comic traditions a genre specifically for girls are not common. I was particularly interested in how these comics were created including the relationship between editors and artists

and artists and readers. This was a really broad start, but took me into the major manga publishing houses. I interviewed widely throughout the *shōjo* manga divisions in the three top publishing houses (Kodansha, Shueisha, and Shogakukan).[4]

Most of my interviews started out with the heads of the manga division and from there I was able to work my way down to lower level editors and artists which was my main interest. According to manga scholars I worked with in Japan, I was lucky to be granted so much access and it was because of my position as a foreigner studying manga. But this situatedness also shaped my interviews. On various occasions, I was asked to meet with the newly created international division of a publishing house, or division personnel; on more than one interview an international manga division employee participated in my interview with the editor. Several times, I was formally or informally interviewed at the end of an interview. Editors wanted to know things like, "why Americans were now interested in manga?" or whether I thought "*shōjo* manga could ever really break into the American market" or "why there aren't' more magazines for kids in the US." This differed from situation to situation, but in general the professionals I spoke with were curious about how some of the features of manga magazines and manga for girls would work in an international context.

Across the board there was a sense among those I interviewed that Japanese popular culture was now considered "cool" in the U.S., but that had not always been the case. For example, the head of Shogakukan's *manga* division regaled me with a detailed account of his unsuccessful attempt to market *Doraemon* to American television companies in the 1970s. When Shogakukan approached US companies to try to market *Doraemon* to American children in the 1970s, they were told that the *tatami*, chopsticks, etc., would have to be removed. Thus, in its original state *Doraemon* was deemed "too Japanese" for American kids. But when the artists were approached with this proposition they replied, "No way, we wrote this for Japanese children and to change the Japanese elements would be to lose the essence of *Doraemon*." So, *Doraemon* was not exported to the US, although in years to come it would become widely popular throughout the rest of the world.

In similar stories about changes in the popularity of identifiably Japanese products in the nooks and crannies of my research this notion of what is "too Japanese" and what will translate was at the heart of issue. Many I spoke with talked about the term *mukokuseki*. *Kokuseki* means nationality and the *mu-* of *mukokuseki* negates it, meaning stateless or having no nationality. In discussions of internationalization of popular culture contents, these terms are often used to denote this very sense of culture or lack of cultural markers. Koichi Iwabuchi, whose research focused on the popularity of Japanese cultural products in Asia, argues that Japanese *manga* and *anime* are popular precisely because of their *mukokuseki* characteristics (Iwabuchi 2001, 27, 2002, 32-33). That is, they do not seem "too Japanese." The editors, artists, and scholars I spoke with all viewed the characters themselves as *mukokuseki* in form. They pointed to the overall lack of distinct facial and bodily features, line-drawn nose and mouth, etc. This is most commonly explained by what comic book theorist Scott McCloud has called the "masking effect." The masking effect uses clear simple lines and little detail on the characters themselves, particularly the face, while providing elaborate detail in the background. That is, the fewer features and details on the character the more easily ANY reader can identify (McCloud 1993, 42-44).

So, in the early 2000s there was a sense among the manga industry personnel I spoke with that *mukokuseki* manga would be popular internationally, but also that a new age was dawning where the "Japaneseness" was starting to be a part of the draw of these products. This was

serendipitous for the internationalization of manga because manga were not and still are not created with a foreign market in mind. In the manga industry the national market is by far the largest segment. In the hierarchy of markets, Asia is second to Japan, followed by Europe and Australia, and then the US. Furthermore, in interviews with artists and editors, time and again I was told that it is great to have foreign readers, a nice perk, but ultimately the audience they are writing for is that which is closest to their heart, the Japanese.

As the demand abroad grew the manga publishing industry needed the structures to fill the need for translated manga. Thus, each of the major publishing houses that I worked with had an international division ranging from two people with the title, to an actual office within the company, to a whole division. Throughout interviews about international manga presence it became clear that, with the exception of Kodansha, most of those in the international division were fielding requests from a foreign company to translate and publish manga rather than seeking out a new market. They were hands-off, curious about why manga was now so popular, but not actively seeking out broader international audiences. I spoke with several personnel in Shueisha's international rights division. When I met with them, there were four employees in the division, which had been started in 1992 and recently expanded from a two person set of desks to an office suite. Not surprisingly, manga made up 90% of the international rights work the office did. Generally speaking, I was informed, a foreign publishing house contacts them and asks if they can publish a particular manga title. Shueisha international division evaluates what kind of money they will make, the strength of the publishing house, what kind of promotion and the quality of work that will be used. When the translation work is completed then Shueisha and especially the author/editors checks it over to make sure it is of high quality in printing, translation, color, etc. Sometimes the content of the manga has to be changed for overseas markets and if that is the case then the artist must be consulted about possible necessary changes.

Ultimately, my interviews emphasized that the main concern was for the manga to be properly understood by the audience and received well. So quality was considered an important factor. For example, with *shōjo* manga, I was told, the pink feeling/style (けっこうピンク) is very important to keep intact. Ito, a young employee in the international division at Shueisha, told me that readers drive what manga will sell in Japan, so too in other countries. The Japanese publishing house cannot tell what might be popular in another country so they let native publishing houses figure that out. But they do contract to have their manga distributed throughout Asia, and in Europe and the United states. Ito also emphasized the importance of connecting with the readers. "This is the most critical job of manga, to connect with the reader. In that case, fluency of translation with slang and the right tone is very important. So translating is best when it happens at the local site rather than here," he informed me. Indirectly, this tells us about another critical feature of manga that was emphasized throughout my research, and that is natural connection with the readers.

All who I spoke with explained the ways difficulty in translating manga in comparison to anime. For anime you simply have to add translated subtitles or voiceover but the images themselves do not need to be changed for the most part. But because written texts in Japanese are read from right to left and top to bottom, for a Western audience the manga either needs to be redrawn or flipped. This changes the artwork and many artists do not like it, an exemplary problem cited time and again was that it made all samurai seem left handed. One editor at Shueisha said that they have a policy not to allow flipping so that they no longer have to make case-by-case decisions and do not have to upset their artists. Others informed me that on this account France and Italy were easier to work with than England or the US, because their fans

tended to prefer unflipped or original style manga—something which changed in the US right around this time thanks to Tokyopop. What I want to emphasize here, though, is the ways that the manga publishing houses in Japan were thinking about the need for connection with the reader and a natural translation that would ensure quality of experience to the audience wherever they were located, without losing features and style that was quintessential to the original Japanese text. A tall order to be sure.

Finally, I want to talk about the case of Kodansha. Kodansha was interested in publishing Japanese literature for international audiences already in the early 1960s. In 1962 they started a subsidiary company called Kodansha International, with offices in Tokyo, San Francisco, and New York. Their goal in creating Kodansha International was to impart knowledge about Japanese culture to other places. While they started with literature, art and philosophy—and that is still the bulk of what they translate—they developed a particularly interesting series called Bilingual Comics that I want to talk about here. An editor for the series in 2002, Shimizu, let me hang out for a day and see what they do. He said that while Kodansha International was started in order to promote Japanese culture to the west (primarily the US, they only publish in English), the Bilingual Comics were started for overlapping reasons: 1) to introduce the best of manga to the English speaking world,[5] 2) help foreigners practice their Japanese, AND 3) to help Japanese study English with fun titles. To this end, the Bilingual Comics series combines the original Japanese with English added to the original comic page. Typically, the original Japanese text is moved to the margins of the page and the English translation is placed in the speech bubbles/frames. This series aimed to introduce "top" manga to the English speaking world, but it turns out that even throughout the 1990s as manga was becoming more popular in the English speaking world, 80% of those who read Kodansha Bilingual Comics were Japanese who want to practice English. I suspect this is a mix of marketing, the titles they chose, and other commercial availability of manga. For example, two prominent titles *Sazae-san* and *Asakiyumemishi* are quintessential manga in Japan but unfamiliar titles for the English speaking market. Indeed, *Sazae-san* never sold very well in the US according to my contacts, because it entailed too many little Japanese everyday life things, like references to seasons and just traditional small points. They added lots of little explanatory notes at the bottom of the page as a way of teaching about Japanese culture, but this title never did very well outside of Japan.

Thus, as I encountered again and again, in the early 2000s, the manga industry personnel were thinking about what was specific to Japanese manga and what might translate well and appeal to foreign audiences; but the main market for manga and the main audience entailed in the creation process was Japanese.

NOTES

1. This research culminated in my book *Straight from the Heart* from which much of the information for this talk was taken.
2. Mikhail Koulikov, ICv2 White Paper, in *ICv2 Conference on Anime and Manga* (New York, NY: ICv2, 2007).
3. *Doraemon* first appeared in *manga* form in 1970. The beloved manga and anime character is a blue catlike robot from the 22nd century, who lives with a Japanese family and helps out the hapless son Nobita Nobi whenever he gets into trouble. Today he is by far one of the most popular *manga* characters in Japan and throughout Asia; his image saturates commercial products from toys, to lunchboxes, to household appliances.
4. I have romanized the titles of these publishing companies in keeping with their own English language usages.
5. This is a bit misleading because they almost exclusively translated their own titles.

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Marketing Manga in the U.S.: Translational Strategies, Transnational Flows

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Anime and manga are remarkable for being the only cultural forms produced outside the United States that have won widespread mainstream acceptance here during the last twenty years—so much so, in fact, that not only are anime fans willing to watch *subtitled* anime, they are willing to invest the considerable time and energy necessary to learn Japanese well enough that they can translate that content themselves. Anime and manga are consumed by casual mainstream audiences, some of whom graduate into the ranks of passionately engaged communities of fans and translators. These self-organizing curatorial and translational groups are the sites of some of the most interesting and even radical innovations in translational practice that the global cultural marketplace has seen in the last fifty years or more. For these and many other reasons, the manga and anime industries and their associated fan cultures deserve serious and sustained attention from sociologists, cultural historians, and scholars of media and translation studies.

Japanese animation first entered the United States in 1961, when *Alakazam the Great*, an anime feature based loosely on Tezuka Osamu's *Boku no Son-goku*, which itself was based on the *Xiyouji* or *Journey to the West*, was screened in American theaters. Two years later *Astro Boy* began its US syndication run.[1]

In 1973 Richard Kyle and Fred Patten opened the Wonderworld Bookstore in Long Beach, CA, which imported untranslated manga and European graphic novels.[2] In 1978, an antiwar/antinuclear group called Project Gen translated Nakazawa Keiji's *Barefoot Gen* into English, which was published by a tiny San Francisco publisher called Educomics, which became, according to some sources, the first commercial English translation of a Japanese manga.[3] Other manga started being translated and appearing in "adult" comic magazines like *Heavy Metal* and *EPIC Illustrated*. In 1983 Frederick Schodt's *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* appeared, the first book in English to focus on the medium.[4]

In 1987, however, manga truly experienced liftoff in the United States. This is the year that VIZ comics was established. The history of the origins of the company is contested.[5] Although we may never know exactly where the first spark of the idea for VIZ came from, Japanese publishers launching subsidiaries to publish translations of their books was nothing new. Kōdansha launched Kodansha International in 1963, over two decades earlier.[6]

After the advent of VIZ in the late 1980s translations started to be produced with regularity, and new, if smaller, players such as Antarctic Press, Sun Publishing, and CPM Manga began to appear, followed in the 1990s by larger companies such as Dark Horse and Mixx—later Tokyopop—that started to rival VIZ. Tokyopop's major contribution was arguably the introduction of Shōjo manga to the American market in the form of *Magic Knight Rayearth* and *Sailor Moon*, first excerpted in its manga magazine *Mixxzine*.

Despite this slow and steady growth, throughout the 1990s manga in the US remained confined to the realm of subculture. The mainstream breakthrough can be traced to a decisive event. As Brigid Alverson writes in *Publisher's Weekly*, "The boom in licensed Japanese comics began in the early 2000s when the mall bookstore chain Waldenbooks started carrying manga."[7] While word-of-mouth can make a significant difference in the sales of a film or book, this analysis suggests that manga's breakthrough was less the result of fan pull than of retailer push, followed by the leveraging of the power of television. This is not to say that fans did not or do

not continue to play instrumental roles in the dissemination of manga culture, but if fan communities were the only vector for this widespread growth, it most likely would have happened even earlier.

My Vertical Years

Vertical, Inc. was founded in 2001 just as the manga and East Asia booms were beginning. The company was founded by Sakai Hiroki, a former editor at Nikkei Books. Similar companies already existed: Kodansha International, mentioned earlier, but also independent publishers such as Charles E. Tuttle, Stone Bridge Press, and Weatherhill, as well as the dedicated manga publishers. Translations of Japanese literature were also already being published by the large publishing houses like Random House. Vertical's strategy was to address two major gaps in the translation picture: popular genre fiction, and classic manga as exemplified by the works of Tezuka. Neither of these domains had until then been entirely neglected in terms of translation, but Sakai felt there was a niche in the market waiting to filled. He recruited Ioannis (Yani) Mentzas, a half-Greek, half-Japanese native of Kōbe, at the time a Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature at Columbia, to serve as the new press's editorial director.

Vertical published its first titles in 2003. Its inaugural manga publications were the first volumes of Tezuka's *Buddha* series. Vertical made a decision from the beginning *not* to court the typical manga reader. This decision was partly a practical one: VIZ had exclusive access to the manga content of both Shōgakukan and Shūeisha, which joined the VIZ family in 2002. Kōdansha, meanwhile, had inked a deal with Random House's Del Rey to form Del Rey Manga. At the same time, Tokyopop was already sitting on most of what was left of Kōdansha's manga content.

The decision to focus on general readers brought other decisions in its wake. The first was the decision to flip Tezuka's manga. Mentzas knew that manga fans would complain, but these decisions are all being made in 2001 and 2002, before the manga market experienced the dramatic growth of mid-decade.

Before and during the period that I worked at Vertical, the Tezuka manga were the best-selling titles in Vertical's catalog. By the time I started working there it had become evident that Vertical would only survive if it expanded its manga offerings and also branched out into other types of fare: sudoku puzzle books, craft books, cookbooks, business books, and so forth. Vertical's first foray into non-Tezuka manga were *To Terra* and the *Andromeda Stories* of Takemiya Keiko. Again, for reasons both pragmatic and pedagogical, we moved in the direction of neglected classics.

I left Vertical in 2008, and so I was not able to witness first-hand the dramatic changes and restructurings that befell the industry in the wake of the economic crisis that hit shortly thereafter. Manga sales started to decline in 2009 and continued declining for the next three years. While 1987 and 2002 had been inflection points in the growth of manga in the United States, 2011 was the year that the bubble burst. Borders, the parent company of Waldenbooks closed its doors in 2011, which sent shock waves throughout the manga industry and publishing as a whole. Tokyopop laid off most of its workers and essentially shut down—although the company ultimately did not disappear, it stopped publishing new titles. The number of different manga volumes published in the US went from over 1500 in 2007 to 695 in 2011. In 2012 Milton Griepp of ICv2 estimated the manga market at $105 million, a little more than half of what it had been in 2007.[8]

Vertical also faced a moment of existential threat in the beginning of 2011, but it had certain advantages that Tokyopop did not that allowed it to survive. First, because manga was only one component of its list rather than the bulk of it, its fortunes were not as intimately tied to Borders/Waldenbooks as the dedicated manga publishers. Second, Vertical's identity as an all-around cultural missionary for Japan meant that deep-pocketed Japanese backers could probably once again be found to bail it out. That's exactly what happened: The Japanese book distribution company Nippon Shuppan Hanbai, which had been Vertical's largest stakeholder between 2006 and 2011, sold its stake to a consortium of Kōdansha and Dai Nippon printing company in February of 2011. A few weeks later, Kōdansha announced that Kodansha International, the subsidiary that set the mold for presenting Japanese content in the US, would be closing its doors.[9]

Why this flurry of acquisitions and restructurings? I am not privy to what was happening inside Vertical at the time, and I certainly cannot pretend to know what Kōdansha was thinking, but I do know that in 2008 Kōdansha allowed the manga licenses held by Tokyopop to expire. In October of 2010 it further announced that it would start publishing manga directly through an arm called Kodansha USA and take its titles back from Del Rey Manga. Despite Kodansha International's closure, Kōdansha still retains a significant presence in the US in Kodansha USA, Vertical, and the Vertical spinoff Vertical Comics, which has a different editor than Vertical.

More Recent Developments

The manga market has slowly recovered over the past three years, due in part precisely to growing sales of manga in digital formats, mainly on a pay-per-title basis, but now also including all-you-can-read digital subscription services such as Crunchyroll Manga and Gen Manga. Although total market revenue is still not what it was in 2007, the present level of sales seems sustainable for the time being. Manga's fortunes are no worse than those of any other forms of content, all of which are contending with new models of digital distribution. It should be noted, too, that manga sales in *Japan itself* are also in slow decline, a symptom of a publishing industry in crisis and a dearth of new blockbuster series appearing on the scene.[10]

It goes without saying that fan communities continue to play a very large role in all of this; indeed, manga and anime convention attendance has been steadily growing since 2000, growing even when manga sales slumped during the turn of the last decade. Scanlation groups continue to thrive, even though digital distribution channels now mean that US-based fans can get new content legally faster than ever before.[11] Their role will continue to be an important one, but as I think the thrust of my presentation has suggested, manga is still a business and its production, distribution, and reception still follow fairly traditional patterns that involve gatekeepers and intermediaries. The decisions that these businesses make are shaped not only by market forces and fan requests, but also by their own institutional resources, histories, and cultures. Fan communities generally do with that content as they wish without necessarily influencing the tastes of a more casual tier of consumers, who tend to gravitate toward what the industry makes readily available. The almost perfect correspondence of the manga boom with the golden Waldenbooks/Borders age makes that idea hard to dispute. At the same time, manga and anime have been woven into American culture in a way suggesting that they—unlike, say, J-Horror films—are much more than passing fads.

NOTES

1. For the concise history of manga in the United States, I am heavily indebted to Jason Thompson, "Jason

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2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Frederik L Schodt, *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* (Tōkyō; New York: Kodansha International, 1983).
5. Thompson, "Jason Thompson's House of 1000 Manga."
6. Setsuko Kamiya and Mizuho Aoki, "Kodansha International to Close Doors," *The Japan Times Online*, March 4, 2011, http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2011/03/04/national/kodansha-international-to-close-doors/.
7. Brigid Alverson, "Manga 2013: A Smaller, More Sustainable Market," *PublishersWeekly.com*, accessed September 21, 2015, http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/booknews/comics/article/56693-manga-2013-a-smaller-more-sustainable-market.html.
8. "NYCC: ICv2 White Paper Presentation Spotlights Comics Sales & Trends - Comic Book Resources," October 12, 2012, http://www.comicbookresources.com/?page=article&id=41559.
9. Kamiya and Aoki, "Kodansha International to Close Doors."
10. "The Death of Manga: Failure to Adapt," accessed September 21, 2015, http://postbubbleculture.blogs.wm.edu/2015/04/27/the-death-of-manga/.
11. For a discussion of scanlation culture and practices, see Hye-Kyung Lee, "Between Fan Culture and Copyright Infringement: Manga Scanlation," *Media, Culture & Society* 31, no. 6 (2009): 1011–22.

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Global Manga: "Japanese" Comics without Japan?[1]

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Outside Japan, the term "manga" usually refers to comics originally published in Japan. Yet nowadays many publications labeled "manga" are not translations of Japanese works but rather have been wholly conceived and created elsewhere. These works I term "global manga," and in this talk I discussed my definition of this term and the range and diversity of its cultural production throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, and even Africa and the Middle East.

I also addressed some of the controversies surrounding global manga and suggest future—and in my view more productive—directions for future research. I argued that these comics, although often derided and dismissed as "fake manga," represent an important but understudied global cultural phenomenon which, controversially, may even point to a future of Japanese comics without Japan.

As scholars, therefore, we must take seriously the political economy and cultural production of global manga and explore the conditions under which it arises and flourishes; what counts as "manga" and who gets to decide; the implications of global manga for contemporary economies of cultural and creative labor; the ways in which it is shaped by or mixes with local cultural forms and contexts; and, ultimately, what it means for manga to be "authentically" Japanese in the first place.

The talk given at OSU's Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum on April 4, 2015 is based upon the introduction to an edited collection of the same name.[1] *Global Manga* presents new empirical research on the production of global manga culture from scholars across the humanities and social sciences, as well as first person pieces and historical overviews written by global manga artists and industry insiders.

NOTES

1. See Casey Brienza, "Introduction: Manga without Japan?," in *Global Manga: "Japanese" Comics without Japan*? (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 1–21.

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